



## ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF FIRE, BUILDING, AND LIFE SAFETY

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OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATION \* OFFICE OF MANUFACTURED HOUSING \* OFFICE OF STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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### **Keeping the Community Warm and Safe**

*State Fire Marshal Provides Important Safety Winter Heating Tips to Prevent Injury & Fire*

(Phoenix, AZ)- Winter is upon us! Let's face it, many of us are used to the squelching heat, we can't really handle the cool weather. Naturally, this causes us to turn on the heat.

Items such as a furnace, fireplace, wood burning stove, or portable space heater, can all be used to heat your home. According to the National Fire Protection Association ("NFPA"), "heating equipment is the leading cause of home fire deaths", and "almost half of home heating equipment fires are reported [from December through February]". Here are some important safety tips to make sure you don't become part of that statistic!

- "Three Feet Rule":
  - Keep flammable material at least three feet away from your heating source.
  - Keep kids at least three feet away from any fire source.
- If you use the fireplace:
  - Make sure you're not burning on a "no burn day".
  - Use a sturdy screen in front of the fireplace, to keep embers out of the room, and in the fire place.
  - Do not put plastic or metal cans into the fire.
  - Get your chimney cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional.
  - When cleaning the fireplace after the fire has gone out, make sure the ashes are cool before you put them into a metal container, and keep the container a safe distance away from your home.
- Do Not use your oven to heat your home.
- Turn off portable space heaters when you're not in the room.
- If you have a fuel burning space heater, make sure you're using the correct fuel (specified by the manufacturer) in it.
- Electric Blankets:
  - Avoid use if you have a condition that might cause loss of sensation in any part of your body.
  - Might be wise to use as a "pre-warmer" to your bedding, but turned off when you're in bed.
- Smoke Alarms:
  - Test monthly
  - Look into a smoke alarm that also has a carbon monoxide detector built into it.

According to the NFPA, in 2010, an "estimated 57,100 reported U.S. home structure fires" (15% of all reported home fires) involved heating equipment. There were "490" people who died from those fires, "1,530" people injured, and "\$1.1 billion in direct property damage."

The Arizona Department of Fire, Building and Life Safety encourages Arizonan's to take these precautions so everyone may enjoy a safe and warm winter. Visit [www.dfbfs.az.gov](http://www.dfbfs.az.gov) for more information.